

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 2 and 4 are amended. The amendments are supported by the original application and no new matter is added. Claims 7-13 are cancelled.

Claims 1, 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Saita (US 5,327,986). Applicants traverse the rejection to the extent that it can be maintained.

A pinion assist electric power steering apparatus having two steering assist motors can experience torque ripple. Because each of the two motors is connected to the steering system by a rack and pinion means, and each motor can impart vibration from torque ripple, steering feel can be impaired and noise from motor operation increased (paragraph 22). Further, when the rotation of one motor momentarily becomes opposite, the assist torques of the two motors are momentarily opposed, resulting in deteriorated responsiveness of the steering system (paragraph 10). Applicants have found that these problems can be minimized by providing two motors in a spaced apart relationship for applying an auxiliary steering to different positions of the rack shaft of the steering system. Further, Applicants have found that by including a time difference in the starting of the two motors, the occurrence of torque fluctuation is eliminated and smooth steering control is possible (paragraphs 24-25).

Claim 1 is amended to recite that the two motors apply auxiliary steering force to different positions on the rack shaft of the steering system. Saita fails to disclose this structure. Saita discloses a steering assist system having two motors operatively connected to a worm drive that provides a steering assist at one position on the rack shaft. The Saita device provides steering assist from the first electric motor or the first and second electric motors, and in either case, provides the assist at only one rack position. Applicants respectfully submit that Saita does not anticipate claim 1, or dependent claims 3 and 5, and request that the rejection be withdrawn on this ground.

Claim 6 is reject under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saita in view of Geyer et al. (US publication no 2003/0111290 A1, dated 6/19/2003). Applicants traverse the rejection to the extent that it can be maintained.

Claims 6 depends from claim 1. For the reasons stated above, claim 1 as amended, is not disclose by Saito. Geyer discloses a steering system comprising two steering motors each operatively connected to a gear set, preferably a planetary gear set. The gear sets are in turn each operatively connected to a "rack". However, the structure referred to as a "rack" by Geyer is an internally threaded ball screw device, and not a rack as understood by one skilled in the art. The combination of Geyer with Saita et al. does not remedy the deficiencies of Saita et al.. Applicants respectfully submit that the Saita et al. in view of Geyer does not render claim 6 obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art

Further, Applicants claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 to earlier filed foreign applications that predate the Geyer reference.

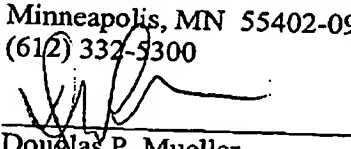
Applicants request that the rejection of claim 6 for obviousness be withdrawn.

Claims 2 and 4 are objected to and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 2 and 4 are rewritten in independent form.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date